(c) The balance share would be released after schemes sent by the State Government are sanctioned, subject to the availability of funds.

Non-Lifting of Cargo from Major Ports

721. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that in most of the major ports in the country cargo has piled up due to non-lifting of the same which is causing problems for the cargo handling at the ports;

(b) if so, the details thereof port-wise as on date and quantity of cargo in each port which has not been lifted for more than two months; and

(c) the remedial measures proposed to be taken to decongest the major ports from accumulated cargo?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise. However, the major port trusts have been taking action to dispose off the unclaimed & uncleared cargo after expiry of 60 days as per the provisions of Major Port Trust Act, 1963.

Expansion of Highways in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Assam

722. SHRI SHIV CHARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state: the details of steps taken/contemplated by Government for improvement and expansion of National Highways passing through Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Assam?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): The improvement of existing National Highways and declaration of new roads as National Highways, is a continuous process depending on the availability of funds. During the year 1997-98 funds for development to the tune of Rs. 25.50 crores, Rs. 17.00 crores and Rs. 18.21 crores were allocated to the States of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Assam respectively. Also 170 Kms, 434 Kms and 66 Kms have been declared as new National Highways during the year 1997-98 for these States. As the Budget for the year 1998-99 is yet to be approved by the Parliament, the programme for development cannot be decided.

Pathkar on four lane highways

723. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH SURYA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have proposed to levy "Pathkar on four lane highways";

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) for which purpose the fund so collected would be utilized?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Government has decided to levy user fee on four lane highways as follows:

Type of Vehicle	Rs./Km.
(i) Car/Jeep/Van	0.40
(ii) LCV	0.70
(iii) Truck/Buses	1.40
(iv) Heavy construction machinery & earth moving equipment	3.00

(c) Funds so collected will be utilised for maintenance and development of National Highways.

Implementation of "Rest Areas" concept in Andhra Pradesh

724. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Highways Authority of India has totally ignored the concept of "Rest Areas" in various road development programmes in Andhra Pradesh;